576 is called "qämmash", an important etiquette. Its origin may stem from the well-known oriental pattern of protecting an important personage from being poisoned, and since the feudal lord is still imitated among the Amhara, even by peasants, the custom is still prevalent in rural areas, provincial towns, and even in Addis Ababa.

E. Utensils and Tools.

322 Whenever possible, the Amhara likes to utilize direct products of nature, such as natural shape of branches, branch forks, branches at the right angle (e.g.for adzes), gradual thickening of a branch of hardwood (e.g. for ax handles). Much time is spent in the bush looking for the right wood, for there is no carpentry on any developed level. Sawing is unknown. So is splitting of wood to prepare boards, so that laborious chopping away at a log from both sides would be necessary. Nailing and gluing is still not done in rural areas. To drill a hole in wood, the blacksmith is called and burns a hole with an iron poke. Oxhide strips are used for fastening.

412 415 Therefore there are very few wooden utensils. Spoons and forks are not used by the Amhara. During dinner, pieces of enjära are ripped from the edge, to serve as spoon and fork. Then the piece is used to fish out a morsel of meat and some of the sauce of the "wot". Iron knives are used at dinner time only at a feast of "brundo", raw beef, when a red morsel is cut off just in front of the teeth.

412 415 463 Preparations of tools and utensils fall into four categories of division of labor: (1) Work done by special-

412 415 463 ists such as the ironsmith and tanner; (2) time-consuming work, e.g. pottery, done by women; (3) Unskilled and semi-skilled work that may require physical strength but is not time-consuming or can be done at irregular intervals, and is the prerogative of Amhara men (e.g. work in horn and wood); (4) utensils that may be made by either men or women (e.g. fiber and basket work).

322 [321] Category (3) includes items of wood and horn perhaps because traditional weapons and tools, if they were not of iron, were used by men, warriors, and the low degree technical development did not require a specialist. [531] Ornamentation consists of simple incisions, of rough geometric [303] nature, in the wood. Wooden combs together with their handles are whittled out of a single piece of wood. [412] Wooden mortars, that may be hip-high, are carved laboriously out of treetrunks by a combination of carving with adze and the use of fire. The pestle is carved, also by men, [354] from a somewhat longer, arm-thick hardwood branch. On occasion one finds a three-legged, bowl-like stool carved by hand with adzed and knives, probably in imitation of the Galla, for the typical Amhara chair of nobles and bishops is a higher hardwood frame with a seat and back-[407] rest of interlaced oxhide. The wooden plow, one-handed, consists of a long, stout stick ("erf"), at the bottom end of which wooden wedges ("deger") hold the plowpoint [231] firmly in place. A lighter yoke called "jengela" is made for young and not fully grown oxen. All tools are collectively known as "eqa" (lit. baggage).

321 415 Horn is largely made into containers, also by men.

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

326
563
[443]

Another difficulty is that the Falasha, observing Sabbath on Saturday when the big markets are in operation, cannot market any surplus of iron products directly, even if they wanted to, and must use a middleman, usually a Muslim, who absorbs any extra profit that might accrue in town. Thus the economic significance of their craft remains entirely in the old pattern, and is not developing in a modern direction, which it might have as a result of recent Western contact, stimulation and tools. The Falasha are recasting every part of their own rifles except the barrel, and their womenfolk have attempted to make glass out of sand (with little success) and modern Yemenite clay incense burners (with more success).

C. Carpentry.

322 Carpentry has already been characterized as minimal, incidental, merely semi-occupational among the Amhara, and as a tangential task of the ironsmith toolmaker. At best, the carpenter ("tarabi") is a part-time specialist.

The riflestock, of wanza wood, made by the ironsmith, often leads to his being asked to do other special woodwork, e.g. saddlemaking. If he becomes proficient in it, he may do nothing else during part of the year, and then send the finished, wooden saddle to the faqi tanners for a leather cover. For his own labor he may charge as much as Eth$8.- a better profit than that achieved by the average ironsmith. Wanza wood (Cordia abyssinica) is also used for the legs of the "alga" bed, so that the

0322 saddlemaker is usually an expert at lumbering. A well-made "korecha", wooden, skin-covered saddle, with adornements, made to order, may cost a total of Eth$25.-

D. Tanning

281 The consumption of leather articles among the Amhara is tremendous for a settled agricultural people. It is reminiscent of Hamitic-speaking tribes whose ecology is based on animal husbandry, and the technology of tanning and manufacture of leather articles is linked with that of North Africa. The ethnic group that does this specialized work in Amhara territory, the Faqi, were Cushitic (Hamitic) - speaking, and probably constitute an early group in residence in Ethiopia. Products consumed include cooking utensils especially for travelling, riding equipment, scabbards, shields, and formerly skin clothing (now worn only by itinerant monks).

281 563 797. The Faqi live in scattered hamlets of their own, the size of which is usually like the smaller Amhara ones: patrilocal residence, 5 to 6 huts at most, each occupied by a biological family. Until very recently, none of them were Coptic Christians since the Coptic priesthood considered these "pagans" on the same level as occupational hunters, too low to be "raised to Christianity". They spoke old-Cushitic languages such as Qemant and other Agau tongues, and gathered in remote tree-groves on top of hills for occasional religious worship similar to that of the "pagan" Galla. Now most of them speak or at least understand Amharic, and since 1942 some have become con-